

**(Washington, DC)** Today, the Republican-led House of Representatives defeated two amendments introduced by Congressman Alcee L. Hastings (D-Miramar) to H.R. 1229, a bill that among other things, would give the Department of Interior a 60-day deadline by which to approve offshore drilling permit applications. Under the bill, if the Secretary fails to act within this 60-day period, the permit is automatically approved.

Hastings' Amendment #8 requires any new application for drilling or exploration to include a detailed description of to what extent and by when any oil found on the leased property will decrease the price of oil for the American consumer. Furthermore, Hastings' Amendment #11 strikes Section 207 of H.R. 1229, ending the awarding of attorneys' fees under the *Equal Access to Justice Act*

for many legal challenges seeking enforcement of our country's environmental standards. As currently drafted, Section 207 makes it easier for large oil and gas companies to completely ignore these laws and regulations.

**(Please find attached a copy of the amendments).**

"The Republicans' 'drill baby drill' agenda will not bring down the price of gas at the pump for hardworking Americans. It will not help our economy. And it certainly won't help our environment. Instead, the only discernable goal of the Republicans' so-called energy plan is to help line the pockets of oil companies at taxpayer expense," said Hastings. "This bill is a windfall for the large energy companies responsible for the *Exxon Valdez* and *BP Deepwater Horizon* oil spills at the same time these companies are turning high gas prices for hardworking Americans into record profits for themselves.

"It was just over a year ago that the explosion of the *BP Deepwater Horizon* oil rig killed 11 men, disbursed 4.9 million barrels of crude oil into the water, destroyed countless businesses and created an environmental catastrophe in the Gulf of Mexico. There is only one way to ensure that there will never be another spill and that is to stop drilling offshore once and for all," further noted Hastings. "I believe that our current energy policies must be changed. We have a responsibility to ourselves and future generations to do so. Unfortunately, the defeat of my amendments demonstrates that Republicans in Congress are more interested in making big oil tycoons richer than doing what is right for the average American."

*Congressman Alcee L. Hastings serves as Senior Member of the House Rules Committee, Ranking Democratic Member of the U.S. Helsinki Commission, and Democratic Chairman of the*

*Florida Delegation.*

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 [&nbsp;Amendment 8 to H.R. 1229.pdf](#)

 [&nbsp;Amendment 11 to H.R. 1229.pdf](#)